

UP NATIVE PLANT PROGRAM

*Summary of Accomplishments, Current
Activities and Opportunities for
Cooperation*



BLM NATIONAL PLANT MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT PROTOCOL FOCUS AREAS

1. Native Seed Collection
2. Evaluation and Development
3. Field Establishment
4. Seed Production by Private Growers
5. Seed Storage
6. Communications
7. Market Stability
8. Restoration of Native Plant Communities.

1: NATIVE SEED COLLECTION

Past Accomplishments:

- 250 wildland seed collections of 49 species were made on and adjacent to the Uncompahgre Plateau from 2003-2005. Additional collections were made in eastern Utah to supplement and compliment the Colorado collections.
- All collections (over 350) were submitted to the Seeds of Success Program through the BLM.

1: NATIVE SEED COLLECTION

Current Work:

- Maintain the viability of the current seed stock of key species. This may require recollecting species (especially forbs) or maintaining increase fields.
- **Collect new species:** Wildland collect seed for 24 species key to Gunnison sage grouse (GuSG).

1: NATIVE SEED COLLECTION

Opportunities for Cooperation by CPNPI Partners:

- Develop a 2011 wildland seed collection strategy plan. Post on one website with the ability for partners to update data with progress made.
- Cooperate with crews in UT, CO and AZ on seed collections.

2: EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Past Accomplishments:

- Plant Biology and Life History Studies
- Cultivation Studies (Spacing and Irrigation)
- Common Garden Studies



2: EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Current Work:

- Common garden study with Upper CO Env. Plant Center on the Plateau of 45 accessions of 20 species.
- Cultivation study of 15 UP perennial species and 8 pioneer (annual) species in cooperation with the San Juan NF and CSU.
- Cooperation with USFS R4 on adaptability study of perennial grasses.

2: EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities for Cooperation by CPNPI Partners:

- Review past studies and assist in analyzing data.
- Coordinate, strategize and prioritize new research projects.
- Establish key attributes & methodologies for studies.
- Post results on one website accessible to all.

3: FIELD ESTABLISHMENT

Past Accomplishments:

- 29 species (10 grasses, 13 forbs and 6 shrubs) have been planted in seed increase fields from 2004-2010.
- Over 700 pounds of cleaned seed have been produced.



3: FIELD ESTABLISHMENT

Current Work:

- In-house seed increase fields for 2 shrubs in CO.
- The UP is working with 4 private growers on propagating seed from 14 species (7 grasses and 7 forbs). Several of the forb species have required contract growing with buy back guarantees.

3. FIELD ESTABLISHMENT

Opportunities for Cooperation by CPNPI Partners:

- Establish increase fields at Rio Mesa and other sites for priority species that commercial growers are not producing.

4: SEED PRODUCTION BY PRIVATE GROWERS

Past Accomplishments:

- The UP & CSU - Rogers Mesa Research Center, worked with 4 private growers in western Colorado to produce seed from 4 grasses from 2004-2007.
- Since 2008, the UP has been working with private growers in CO, WA and OR to produce native seed. There are currently 3 grasses available for purchase:
 - É 'UP Colorado Plateau' Sandberg bluegrass
 - É 'UP Ruin Canyon' muttongrass
 - É 'UP Cold Springs' mountain brome
- The UP is actively promoting their purchase. Due to a lack of interest in purchasing seed, 50 acres of Sandberg bluegrass has been pulled out.

4: SEED PRODUCTION BY PRIVATE GROWERS

Current Work:

- 4 private growers are propagating seed from 14 species (7 grasses and 7 forbs). Several of the forb species have required contract growing with buy back guarantees.
- Seed from CO Plateau native species is anticipated to be available for purchase in 2011.
- The UP has identified 9 new species (1 grass and 8 forbs) to provide to private growers in 2011.

4: SEED PRODUCTION BY PRIVATE GROWERS

Opportunities for Cooperation by CPNPI Partners:

- Develop a list of priority species for large-scale production and use across the CO Plateau.
- Develop a protocol for releasing seed and an area of applicability for each species.
- Implement IDIQ contracting with growers.
- Appoint a production coordinator.
- Develop a protocol for technical fact sheet/release notes.

4: SEED PRODUCTION BY PRIVATE GROWERS

Opportunities for

○ Develop a list of scale producers on the Plateau.

○ Develop a program in an area of application

○ Implement ID

○ Appoint a producer

○ Develop a program sheet/release

The UP Native Plant Program has available a supplier for a Western Colorado source of

Sandberg Bluegrass (*Poa secunda*)

Facts about Sandberg bluegrass:

- Early perennial bunchgrass
- Grows at elevations of 4,000 to 12,000 ft
- Occurs on a wide range of soil types
- Early spring producer
- Principle native grass for the Colorado Plateau region
- Performs well in seed mixes
- Successfully seeded by drill or broadcast
- Competes well with cheatgrass
- The full wildland seeding rate is 2.0 lb/ac PLS, but this species would normally be included in native seed mixtures at a rate of 1/4 to 1/2 lb/ac PLS.



Sheri Hagwood @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

Background

'UP Colorado Plateau' Sandberg bluegrass originated on the Uncompahgre Plateau, located in western Colorado. This is the first commercial pre-variety release of a UP Native Plant Program product. Sandberg bluegrass was selected for commercial production based on its growth, flower and seed formation, seed production, forage quantity and seed quality attributes.

Characteristics of the 'UP Colorado Plateau' collection site and seed quality:

- Elevation: 6986 ft.
- Soils: 50% Barboncito and similar soils, 45% Gapmesa and similar soils, 5% minor components.
- Annual mean precipitation: 10 to 12 inches
- Seed test results: Purity - 98.28%, Germination - 90%, Seed Viability (TZ) - 92%, Weed Seed - 0%, Crop Seed - .01% (Tests performed by the Washington State Dept of Ag.)



'UP Colorado Plateau' Sandberg bluegrass is now available for purchase by land management agencies, private landowners and private companies.

If you would like more information, contact us at: info@UPpartnership.org

For purchase and grower information, visit our website at:

5: SEED STORAGE

Current Work :

- The Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW) plans to construct a 9,300 ft² native seed storage facility on the Escalante State Wildlife Area, west of Delta, CO in 2011 using “Species Conservation Trust” funds. The facility will include temperature controlled and cold storage.
- The DOW anticipates hiring a native plant program coordinator for CO.

5: SEED STORAGE

Opportunities for Cooperation by CPNPI Partners:

- It is anticipated that the USDA and USDI will financially support and utilize the DOW facility in western CO.
- There is a need to ensure the facility is part of the overall seed storage strategy in the west.
- Develop seed storage strategy.

6: COMMUNICATIONS

Past Accomplishments:

- Website
- E-newsletters
- Workshops
- Publications
- Demand Survey



6: COMMUNICATIONS

Opportunities for Cooperation by CPNPI Partners:

- Develop a network to communicate seed that is available for purchase
- Strengthen commitment to use native seed among agencies (energy rehab).
- Create a website for past and current research
- Host restoration workshops for field-level agency personnel.
- Create CPNPI annual work plans (March – March)
- Host annual CPNPI meeting in March where the group reviews past annual work plan and develops next year's plan.

7: MARKET STABILITY

Current Work:

- The UP continues to work with private growers to produce native seed and to assist agencies, private landowners and companies in purchasing seed through our website, emails, flyers, phone calls, etc.



7: MARKET STABILITY

Current Work:

- Available native seed is sitting in warehouses, not being purchased.
 - € Due to a lack of interest in purchasing seed, 50 acres of Sandberg bluegrass has been pulled out.
 - € 9,000 lbs of mountain brome is available. 8 acres will be pulled out of production if no seed is purchased.

7: MARKET STABILITY

Opportunities for Cooperation by CPNPI Partners:

- Agree to support burgeoning seed industry by purchasing native seed from the CP area.
- Develop a list of priority species for production. These species will be purchased on a large-scale by all CPNPI partners.
- Prior to commercial contracting, assess and quantify demand of species (fire rehab, wildlife and restoration projects).
- Incorporate key species into large-scale seed buys by federal and state agencies.

8: RESTORATION OF NATIVE COMMUNITIES

Past Accomplishments:

- 2007: the UP purchased 180 lbs of mountain brome produced by a private grower for use on local project.
- 2008: the UP delivered 554 pounds of seed from 30 native species and 200 cliffrose transplants to 3 agencies for use on local projects in western CO.
- 2009: the UP purchased 5,500 lbs of seed of Sandberg bluegrass and distributed it to 4 agencies for use in 14 seeding projects across western Colorado.
- 2010: the UP purchased 330 pounds of mountain brome from a private grower.

8: RESTORATION OF NATIVE COMMUNITIES

Opportunities for Cooperation by CPNPI Partners:

- Purchase native seed to use in projects
- Develop coordination of seeding projects to utilize seed
- Share results of seeding successes/failures.





For More Information:

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